

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 MC-02 ACDA-10 OMB-01 AID-05

IGA-01 TRSE-00 EB-07 COME-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /086 W
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P 071305Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6768

INFO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 NEW DELHI 1833

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR IN PK US

SUBJECT: PRESS CRITICISM OF POSSIBLE US ARMS SALES TO
PAKISTAN CONTINUES

1. FOR THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE DAY, MEDIA ON FEB 7 PLAYED INDIA'S
"CONCERN" OVER THE REPORTED US MOVE TO LIFT ARMS EMBARGO TO
PAKISTAN AND BHUTTO'S "CONFIDENCE" IN SECURING AMERICAN ARMS.
EDITORIAL REACTION CONTINUED TO BE CRITICAL.

2. COVERAGE OF PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO'S WASHINGTON
MISSION DOMINATED FRONT PAGES OF ENGLISH-LANGUAGE AND VERNACULAR
NEWSPAPERS APPEARING ON FRIDAY. A TYPICAL HEADLINE APPEARED IN
THE TIMES OF INDIA: "BHUTTO CONFIRMS US LIFTING ARMS EMBARGO."
STATE-RUN RADIO AND TELEVISION PLUGGED THE SAME LINE.

3. MOST PAPERS USED A WASHINGTON-DATELINED PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
STORY LEADING WITH "BHUTTO HAS IN HIS UTTERANCES HERE
CONFIRMED THAT THE UNITED STATES EMBARGO ON THE SUPPLY OF LETHAL
ARMS TO HIS COUNTRY IS BEING REMOVED." THE NEWS ACCOUNTS ADDED:
"IN DEFERENCE TO HIS HOSTS, MR. BHUTTO AVOIDED MAKING A CATEGORICAL
STATEMENT THAT THE US GOVERNMENT HAS ASSURED HIM OF LIFTING
THE EMBARGO."

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4. OTHER RELATED FRONT-PAGE NEWS TREATMENT INCLUDED PTI REPORTS ABOUT "CONCERN" IN NEW DELHI. THEY STRESSED THAT OFFICIAL SOURCES "LEFT NO ONE IN DOUBT ABOUT INDIA'S INDIGNATION AND CONCERN OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF THE REVIVAL OF THE SPIRIT OF CONFRONTATION IN PAKISTAN FOLLOWING INDUCTION OF ARMS INTO THAT COUNTRY." THESE SOURCES HOPED THAT "DEEDS WOULD MATCH WORDS." THEY ALSO ANTICIPATED "VERY STRONG PUBLIC AND PARLIAMENTARY REACTION" IN INDIA.

5. THE TIMES OF INDIA FRONT-PAGED A THREE-COLUMN CARTOON SHOWING PRESIDENT FORD, DRESSED AS A SURGEON, TELLING DR. KISSINGER, "DON'T FEEL NERVOUS, HENRY IT'S A DELICATE OPERATION BUT NOBODY IS GOING TO GET HURT." THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS HOLDING A TRAY MARKED, "ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN."

6. THE INDEPENDENT INDIAN EXPRESS RAN WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT T V PARASURAM'S APPRAISAL THAT "AMERICA HAD MET HIS (BHUTTO'S) MAIN DEMAND...IT WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT THERE WAS MORE SUPPORT THAN OPPOSITION TO THE MOVE IN CONGRESS AND THE PRESS." ANOTHER HINDU THAT MR. BHUTTO WAS PLEASED NOT ONLY WITH GETTING WHAT HE CAME FOR BUT ALSO FOR DRIVING A WEDGE BETWEEN INDIA AND THE US"

7. POLITICAL COLUMNIST G K REDDY POINTED OUT IN THE HINDU THAT THE UNITED STATES IS APPARENTLY PROCEEDING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA IS CONCERNED MORE ABOUT THE PSYCHOLOGY THAN THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ARMS SALE: "THE FORD ADMINISTRATION HAS DELIBERATELY LEAKED OUT THE DECISION WELL IN ADVANCE WITH THE OBVIOUS INTENTION OF PREPARING THE INDIAN OPINION IN THE SENSE THAT IT DOES NOT COME AS A PAINFUL SURPRISE WHEN THE ANNOUNCEMENT IS MADE AT THE PROPER TIME."

8. A COMMENTATOR ON THE ALL INDIA RADIO (GENERAL OVERSEAS SERVICE) JUDGED THE DEVELOPMENT "AS A MATTER OF SERIOUS CONCERN," NOTING: "THE REPORTED US DECISION IS A VIOLATION OF THE ASSURANCES GIVEN BY THE AMERICAN SECRETARY OF STATE, DR. KISSINGER, DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO INDIA THAT HIS COUNTRY WILL DO NOTHING WHICH WILL START AN ARMS RACE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT AND CAUSE A SETBACK TO THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS INITIATED BY INDIA IN THIS REGION."

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9. THE COMMENTATOR WARNED: "FOR WHENEVER THE US ADMINISTRATION HAS LIFTED THE EMBARGO IN THE PAST, EVEN PARTIALLY OR AS A 'ONE TIME EXCEPTION' AS IN 1970, IT HAS LED PAKISTAN TO COMMIT AGGRESSION AGAINST INDIA. AS SUCH, THE FUTURE OF INDO-US RELATIONS HINGES ON THE AMERICAN DECISION ON THE SUPPLY OF ARMS TO PAKISTAN. A WRONG DECISION AT THIS STAGE MAY DAMAGE THESE RELATIONS BEYOND HOPE OF REPAIR."

10. EDITORIAL REACTION WAS MOSTLY STRONG. THE INDEPENDENT AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA, OF CALCUTTA, HELD THAT "BHUTTO HAS WON HIS FIRST ROUND AT WASHINGTON" AND BLAMED THE US "FOR PUTTING THE CLOCK BACK IN INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS." WRITING ALONG SIMILAR LINES, THE PUNJABI-LANGUAGE INDEPENDENT DAILY AKALI PATRIKA, OF JULLUNDUR, ADDED: "US SUPPLY OF ARMS DID NOT GUARANTEE PAKISTAN'S SECURITY. IT ONLY ADDED TO HER PROBLEMS." A LEAD EDITORIAL IN THE RIGHTIST MOTHERLAND, OF DELHI, INFERRED THAT "WHAT HAS HAPPENED...IS A FUNDAMENTAL SHIFT IN AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD INDIA." IT CONCLUDED: SCHNEIDER

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P 071305Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6769

INFO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 NEW DELHI 1833

"WHAT IS THE USE OF HAVING AN INDO-US COMMISSION IN SUCH A SITUATION? THE LEAST THAT THE INDIRA GOVERNMENT CAN DO IS TO CANCEL CHAVAN'S WASHINGTON VISIT FOR THE COMMISSION MEETING NEXT MONTH."

11. SOME MAJOR PAPERS VIEWED THE IMPACT OF ARMS SALES ON INDO-US RELATIONS MORE CAUTIOUSLY. NOTING THAT MR. BHUTTO "APPEARS TO HAVE SUCCEEDED ONLY PARTIALLY," THE INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL EXPRESS REMARKED: "THE PRESIDENT'S PRES SECRETARY, MR. NESSEN, HAS EXPLAINED THAT IF AND WHEN THE EMBARGO IS LIFTED, THE US WILL ADHERE TO TWO GUIDELINES, VIZ. IT WILL NOT CONTRIBUTE TO AN ARMS RACE BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN AND THE US WILL CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION IN THE AREA.

THIS MEANS THAT THE US WILL KEEP INDIA APPRISED OF THE TYPE
AND THE QUANTITY OF ARMS IT WILL SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN IF IT DECIDES
TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. THE SECOND GUIDELINE MENTIONED BY
MR. NESSEN MUST MEAN THAT THE SUPPLY OF AMERICAN ARMS TO
PAKISTAN SHOULD NOT BE OF SUCH A NATURE OR ON SUCH A SCALE AS
TO ENCOURAGE PAKISTAN TO ADOPT AN INTRANSIGENT ATTITUDE TOWARDS
THE RESOLUTION OF THE REMAINING UNSETTLED ISSUES BETWEEN INDIA
AND PAKISTAN." THE EDIT CONTINUED: "WHETHER INDIA SHOULD BE
UNDULY WORKED UP OVER THE POSSIBLE LIFTING OF THE ARMS EMBARGO
WILL DEPEND ON THE REAL INTENTIONS OF THE US GOVERNMENT AND
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WHAT IMPORTANCE IT ATTACHES TO THE AGREEMENT REACHED IN OCTOBER
LAST. "

THE HINDU CAUTIONED: "IT WOULD BE WISE TO HOLD BACK
CRITICISM UNTIL IT IS KNOWN PRECISELY WHAT PAKISTAN IS LIKELY TO
GET FROM THE US AND ITS REAL IMPACT ON OUR MILITARY POSITION.
OBVIOUSLY, WITH THE LOSS OF BANGLADESH, PAKISTAN IS NOT THE
ADVERSARY IT USED TO BE. AND THAT THE SIMLA ACCORDS ARE BEING
IMPLEMENTED AND THAT A TRADE PACT HAS BEEN SIGNED ARE PROOF
THAT ITS FORMER STANCE OF EXTREME HOSTILITY IS NOT BEING MAINTAINED.
IF PAKISTAN IS STILL ANXIOUS TO DEMONSTRATE TO THE WORLD THAT IT
CONTINUES TO BE A CLIENT OF THE UNITED STATES, INDIA NEED NOT
OBJECT, PROVIDED THE US SHOWS A FULL UNDERSTANDING OF INDIA'S
PROBLEMS AND ACTS ACCORDINGLY."SCHNEIDER

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